

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 10, with the following amended paragraph:

It is an object of the invention to indicate a process and an apparatus for forming drops of precursors of thermoplastic polyesters and copolyesters ~~in accordance with the preamble to Claim 1 and Claim 14~~ which overcome the disadvantages of the prior art, result in a shortening of conventional granulation processes, and are based on process steps and apparatuses known hitherto, giving at least surface-crystallized precursors formed into drops, in the form of monomers, oligomers, monomer/glycol mixtures or partially polycondensed materials.

Please replace paragraph beginning at page 3, line 25, with the following amended paragraph:

To this end, the precursor is, in accordance with the invention, introduced into a gaseous medium, where the gaseous medium, after entry of the precursor formed into drops having a diameter from 0.3 to 3 mm into the gaseous medium, accelerates the crystallization process of the precursor and brings about the crystallization state of the precursor in an accelerated manner by holding the drop-form precursor at a temperature above 100°C and below its melting point for a limited time until crystallization of the drop at the surface of the precursor is complete.